

Master chief labels higher education as key to success

by Carlos Najera
8th District command master chief

In my current assignment as the command master chief in the 8th District (Gulf Coast Region) as a direct adviser to the district commander, I monitor the morale of the crew, speak to audiences ranging from the newest recruit to our most senior officials in the Coast Guard, and provide oral and written reports that facilitate high-level decisions impacting pay and allowances, morale, military personnel and the missions of the Coast Guard.

I attribute my success to continuous education, which includes an associates degree in business technology from South Oklahoma City Junior College and a bachelor of science degree in communications and management from Charter Oak State College. To accomplish this I had to obtain funding, find the time, and set my goal.

Using Coast Guard programs, such as Tuition Assistance, Mutual Assistance and the Coast Guard Foundation Grant, helped me meet my goal of obtaining my degrees. Our senior Coast Guard leadership and a lot of hard-working experts at the Coast Guard Institute have made the funds available. All I had to do was apply for the funding. I have enjoyed "Using Other People's Money" to obtain my education.

These are only a few of the avenues available in obtaining funding. There are other organizations that provide educational funding, not only to the military, but also to our dependents. I've used their money too.

However, finding the time to take the courses was also challenging, especially when you're afloat with increasing underway times and increasing workloads. I found the best way for me to continue my



MCPO Carlos Najera, 8th District command master chief

education was to take advantage of programs like the *Student Guide to Success* (also known as Brown Bag University), DANTES and CLEP examinations, and off-line courses. It became a matter of focusing, managing my time and dedicating myself.

I decided to have my military experience evaluated for college credits along with the traditional courses I had taken. My military experience gave me the most college credits based on end-of-course tests taken, military training and experience. Today, military training and experience is valued even more in the civilian community.

The Coast Guard requires a skilled workforce to operate its sophisticated equipment and fleet. This

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From the commanding officer...

By LCDR Todd Campbell
Coast Guard Institute Commanding Officer



As I am pen this article, the first snow of the year in Oklahoma is beginning to fall, which is a clear signal that 2003 is rapidly coming to a close. This year has yielded significant progress in helping make your Coast Guard Institute the best educational and training resource ever.

Therefore, I will use my allotted space to report on some of the improvements made and to provide an update on initiatives planned for the future. As a matter of some background for those who are new and may not know what the Institute is, where it is located and what it provides the Coast Guard, here are a few facts.

The Coast Guard Institute was established on 29 May 1929 and will celebrate its 75th Anniversary this spring. The Institute used to actually teach courses, handle Servicewide exams and write all course material, but has transformed over time into a resource and information processing center for voluntary education, tuition assistance and non-resident training. Our location is on board the Federal Aviation Administration's Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with our spaces physically located on the second floor and basement area of the Multi-purpose Building or MPB (building #24). The unit is composed of the following mix of personnel: active duty personnel ranging from seaman to lieutenant commander, civilian employees ranging from GS-7 to GS-13 and drilling reservists. We also have a local Coast Guard Auxiliary member who provides valuable assistance to us as well. The unit has three customer service departments and two support departments. The customer service departments are: Voluntary Education headed by Joyce Taylor, Non-Resident Training headed by CWO4 Marvin Mason, and Tuition Assistance headed by CWO3 Dale Bunger. The support departments are Information Technology headed by Martha Fischer and Resource Support headed by MCPO Ethan Wainscott.

This diverse band of 44 people helps provide the Coast Guard member with some of the best resources

possible to help you achieve your professional and educational dreams. As a way of feedback, here is what your Institute has been busy working on this past year; the Voluntary Education department was and is still extremely busy deploying the Automated Degree Planning program to help improve the credit assessment and transcript issuing process for those seeking degree plans and more importantly a transcript of military experience. They also have been hard at work deploying the newly formed SOCCOAST Afloat program, which allows underway Coasties an opportunity to continue their educational pursuits at sea. Additionally, the department has been busy processing a record number of Coast Guard Foundation Grant Education requests for those who are E-3 through E-9 and endorsed by their commanding officer for the \$300 annual grant.

I would like to announce the departure of SN Tosha Stutts. She has come down on orders to MST "A" school, and we wish her the best; she has been a valued member of the Voluntary Education Department. Having slipped under the wire for this edition of *Campus News*, I would like to welcome SNYN Sedillo who just arrived this week from YN "A" school and will take SN Stutts place.

The Tuition Assistance Department had a record-breaking year by completing over 20,000 applications for eligible course work taken by nearly 6,600 members, resulting in total expenditures of more than \$8.8 million. Fiscal 2003 was the first year tuition assistance funding was available to members at 100 percent, coverage up to the semester hour cap of \$250 per hour toward the \$4,500 annual cap. Fiscal 2004 has funding coverage remaining at 100 percent with caps remaining unchanged. We are working toward automating the TA application form on our website and should have it available very soon; it will allow members a smoother interface in filling out the form. One slight drawback, though: you will still be required to print it out and fax it to the Institute for processing. Our next step will be to automate the TA form submission process to allow for direct submission via the website in the future. A sad note from the TA Department, CWO4 Bonnie Abendschan (aaabendschan) is retiring after 30+ years of faithful duty

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Campus News

A training newsletter to Team Coast Guard

The Campus News is an unofficial, authorized bimonthly publication of the Coast Guard Institute. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Transportation or the U.S. Coast Guard. Material is for information

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is where Service Members Opportunity College for the Coast Guard (SOCCOAST) has provided even more opportunities for us to receive more college credits for our military experience, especially in our four main missions: maritime law enforcement, maritime safety, environmental protection and national security.

Perhaps the most important tool I discovered was the personalized degree planning provided by the Coast Guard Institute. The plan shows how your military credit and your prior college credit apply to the degree requirements. I worked with the counselors at the Institute periodically throughout the process to ensure that I stayed on track. Finding the time to complete my degree boiled down to this question — How badly do I want the degree?

I always knew I wanted to get a degree. My father graduated from high school and my mother finished the 3rd grade. During that time the opportunities for an education were not readily available as they are today. However, both my parents made a lot of sacrifices and worked hard so that I could have a better opportunity to further my education. They knew the key to a better life was an education. Their hard work and sacrifice motivated me to do well in school and seek higher education. I have continuously sought challenging assignments, not only in my job, but also in my educational goals. The pursuit of an education presents a positive example and inspiration to my children, peers and colleagues. In fact, it was my youngest son who challenged me to finish my bachelor's degree before him. He had just graduat-



A representative from Charter Oak State College, the college from which MCPO Najera earned a B.S. degree, details new college programs for the Coast Guard Institute's voluntary education staff.

“...a solid education can lead to a better job and financial security, whether you decide to leave the military at the end of four years or when you retire.”

ed from high school at the age of 16 and told me he would get his bachelors degree before me. I didn't want to be left behind and I had always told him that the key to success was an education. It was time for me to not only talk the talk, but also to walk the walk.

As parents and supervisors we find ourselves telling our children and colleagues that an education is important, but we ourselves don't have one. More education is required today then ever before because of the fast changing environment. Today a high school diploma is just not enough. The competition is getting stiffer and you need more than just military training and experience when you make the transition to the civilian sector.

Finally, a solid education can lead to a better job and financial security, whether you decide to leave the military at the end of four years or when you retire. You will need a college degree. This is

what motivated me to get my degrees and set my goal.

My military training, experience, and the college credits earned have served me well.

It goes well beyond merely acquiring a four-year degree. The skills and knowledge gained benefit me, both now and when I retire from the military. Receiving an associate's degree in business technology and a bachelor of science degree in communications and management provide personal satisfaction and continued success in today's challenging environment. This required funding, making the time and setting goals. This accomplishment helps me with my current military assignment, serves my goal to become the next master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard and positions me for future opportunities in the civilian world.

For more than 50 years, University of Maryland University College (UMUC) has been recognized as the largest provider of educational services to the U.S. military worldwide. More than 2 million U.S. service members have taken UMUC courses on every continent.

Last year, they numbered more than 53,000 in 29 countries, including the United States. Most military students have come to refer to UMUC simply as "Maryland," and not surprisingly, the university is now a member of the Service members Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Coast Guard network.

Since the mid-1990s, UMUC, with its expertise in distance education serving U.S. military overseas, has gone an even further distance by becoming expert, too, at on-line delivery via the Internet. As a result, last year UMUC students filled more than 110,000 "seats" in virtual classes, making UMUC one of the world's largest "virtual" universities. Military



UMUC joins SOCCOAST

students can take UMUC courses anywhere there is a computer and Internet access.

The tuition for online courses is the same as for those offered in traditional classrooms. For U.S. service members, including Coast Guard personnel, tuition at UMUC is equal to or less than the tuition rate even Maryland residents pay.

Undergraduate

Maryland residents	\$217
Nonresidents of Maryland	\$399
Active-duty military*	\$207

Graduate (standard and Resident Teacher Certification programs)

Maryland residents	\$332
Nonresidents of Maryland	\$542
Active-duty military and spouses* ..	\$332

In addition to degree programs, UMUC offers more than 80 under-

graduate and graduate certificates, more than half of which are entirely online. Students often choose to earn certificates to "test the waters" of a new field, or add an expertise to a current one. Certificates range from workplace communications and gerontology to bio-security and the newest, how institutions deal with terrorism and terrorist attacks.

Unlike most colleges/universities, UMUC also offers a comprehensive array of online student services for all UMUC students, whether they take courses online or face-to-face.

UMUC degrees are "portable," meaning no matter the frequency of relocation or the geographic distance, military students lose no credit when they deploy. Active-duty service members have found, too, that they might be awarded academic credit for their many significant learning opportunities outside the formal course setting through the University's Prior Learning (previous work experiences) and Cooperative (Co-op)

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University of Maryland University College on-line degree programs

The following degree programs can be completed entirely online:

UMUC on-line undergraduate degree programs

- Accounting
- Business administration
- Communication studies
- Computer and information science
- Computer studies
- English
- Environmental management
- Fire science
- History
- Human resource management
- Humanities
- Information systems management
- Legal studies
- Management studies
- Marketing
- Psychology

■ Social science

UMUC on-line graduate degree programs:

- Master of Arts in Teaching
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Distance Education
- Master of Education
- Master of International Management
- M.S. in Accounting and Financial Management
- M.S. in Accounting and Information Technology
- M.S. in Biotechnology Studies
- M.S. in Computer Systems Management
- M.S. in E-Commerce
- M.S. in Environmental Management
- M.S. in Health Care Administration
- M.S. in Information Technology
- M.S. in Management
- M.S. in Technology Management
- M.S. in Telecommunications Management
- Master of Software Engineering

Paper-based CLEP test phase-out

Available as of Sept. 30, 2003	Test No.	Withdrawn Nov. 30, 2003*	Withdrawn Jan. 31, 2004**	Withdrawn March 31, 2004	Re-issued in Paper Format April 2004
College Mathematics	07030	x			x
English Composition	08273/08265	x			x
Natural Sciences	02259	x			x
Social Sciences & History	05991		x		x
Humanities					x
History of the U.S. I	80012	x			x
History of the U.S. II	79014	x			x
Principles of Accounting	78018	x			x
Spanish Language	77038	x			
Analyzing & Interpreting Literature	81019		x		x
College Algebra	11100		x		x
Freshman College Composition	71056		x		x
Introduction to Psychology	70017		x		x
Principles of Management	74039		x		x
American Literature	37061		x		x
English Literature	20079			x	
French Language	76015			x	
Introduction to Educational Psychology	67075			x	
Principles of Macroeconomics	72044			x	
Principles of Microeconomics	73041			x	
Introductory Sociology					x
Information Systems					x

CLEP general tests
CLEP subject tests

* Must order before 01NOV03

** Must order before 15NOV03

Paper-based tests are those you're used to taking through the ESO/TCO at your unit. After a paper-based test has been withdrawn, it will be available only at designated CLEP testing centers in computer-based format. Computer-based tests cost \$50 (the test fee) plus between \$15 and \$25 (for the test center's administration fee). Currently, the armed forces have no provisions for either paying these fees up-front or reimbursing members after the fact. That is, you'll have to pay for these computer-based tests yourself. The good news is that DANTES plans to begin paying the test fee in January and to re-issue some of the most popular tests as paper-based in April.

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Education (integrating classroom learning with on-the-job training) programs.

Like no other institution in history, UMUC has taken its mission to

empower members of the U.S. military to take control of their careers and their lives-through higher education, to the farthest corners of the world-and cyberspace-via the most technologically advanced methods

available today. For more information about UMUC programs, active-duty Coast Guard members should call toll-free (877) 275-8682, or e-mail military@umuc.edu, or visit the university's Web site at www.umuc.edu.

Test-stocking units avoid the wait for EOCTs

Any unit on extended deployment of two months or more and large shore-based units, such as training centers, large air stations, integrated support commands, etc., may become a test-stocking library unit.

A library is a supply of different subject matter end-of-course tests held on a permanent basis by a unit specifically authorized by the Institute. Other units may qualify on a case-by-case basis. Approval for such exceptions is made by the Nonresident Training Department chief, CWO4 Marvin Mason. Library units also have access to the ACGL-2800 Automated Correspondence Course Answer Sheet. The ACGL-

2800 is the on-line answer sheet order entry form. This form reduces test processing time from an average 21 days to two days. This form currently is available only for library units.

All requests for becoming a library unit should be submitted to the Non-Resident Training Department chief. A library unit compatibility survey will then be sent to the ESO, requesting the following information:

- Unit name, address.
- OPFAC and ESOs name and phone number.
- Number of permanent personnel attached to the unit.
- How many tests, on average, does your

unit have onboard at one time?

- What type of storage unit does your unit have to secure EOCTs?
- Anticipated date of deployment, if you are a ship or a date when you would like to begin your library if you are a shore unit.
- Would you be able to absorb other smaller units for test administration?
- Is your unit currently a POPFAC for other units?
- Listing of unclassified EOCTs requested.

Nonlibrary unit personnel are not permitted to test at library units without authorization from the Coast Guard Institute.

Any questions about the library unit process should be directed to YN2 William Dodd, wdodd@cginstitute.uscg.mil.

Advantages of becoming a library unit

Program features

Flexibility in schedules

NRT will partner with each large unit ESO to customize rating EOCTs to meet specific rate needs.

Mass testing services available

Large exam administrations can be scheduled immediately after completion of studies (brown bag, group, team, etc.), scheduled monthly, bimonthly or quarterly event.

Quantity/quality exams on hand

Quantity of exams geared to specific rates and fundamental exams at ESO immediate disposal. ESO submits results by regular mail or electronic test transfer (ETT).

Testing security

ESO administers exams proctoring the procedures assuring exam materials are not exposed before, during, and after examinations

Same day or express service available

ESO has available (ETT) web browser tool to get quick results. (Wednesday and Friday weekly)

Benefits

Benefit to student

Student can schedule their exams to meet their schedules
Benefit to ESO Exams are given with the available frequency and remote locations ESO desire.

Benefit to student

Testing immediately after study completion. Can get results quickly. (ACGL-2800).

Benefit to ESO

Can have frequent and large testing to get students qualified for promotion/into workforce.

Benefit to student

Student can be assured their test is always available individually.
Exams are updated with specific requirements.

Benefit to ESO

Updated exams are FEDEXed to library unit ESOs in advance of mass distribution to meet their specific needs.

Benefit to student

Student can be certain that all examination materials are confidential.

Benefit to ESO

Exams will not be compromised

Benefit to student

Student can have unofficial results posted on CGI web site results page in as little as 48 hours.

Benefit to ESO

Exam results received/viewed more quickly, to speed advancements and prerequisites for workforce

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Advantages of becoming a library unit, continued from Page 6

Walk-in services available at ESO office

Many exams can be scheduled at any time by ESO, allow out-of-local area OPFACs safe driving time to arrive for testing (unit must be under your POPFAC)

Benefit to student

Provides ease and flexibility to student to become qualified at their leisure.

Benefit to ESO

Better time management. Set testing schedules and announcements.



ENS Donald Hunley models a Coast Guard flight suit at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center's Centennial of Flight celebration observance on December 3, 2003.

In keeping with this year's ongoing celebration of the Centennial of Flight, the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center – home of the Coast Guard Institute – decided, at the recommendation of LCDR Campbell, to recognize this monumental achievement in human history in unique fashion (no pun intended). So on Dec. 3, the center presented its original production called, "Fashion of Flight." This one-of-a-kind retrospective featured the people and fashions of the past 100 years. The last century of flight was a magical time in history, and this retrospective of the fashions of the eras was moving. The one-hour show (produced by LCDR Campbell) transported attendees back to the dawn of powered flight, where they took off on a multimedia fashion ride through the centennial of powered flight and landed at the brink of the new millennium. This fascinating multi-media event whisked viewers through each decade following those magnificent Wright Brothers and provided attendees with a remarkable glance at where mankind has been and where it is going.

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with the Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy. Bonnie has been a tremendous asset as department head of Tuition Assistance and helped bring it through the transition from 75 percent to 100 percent funding. Her dedication and strong work ethic will be sorely missed ... happy trails and have fun traveling the country in your Freightliner RV.

The Non-Resident Training Department continues to find ways to improve the testing process by expanding use of the Automated CGI-2800 form. They also are continuing to market to those high-volume testing units the advantages on becoming a library unit (see article in this edition), with dozens choosing to sign up for this capability this year. Related to non-resident training, I would also like to share with you the outstanding job done by our Resource Support Section headed by GMCM Ethan Wainscott. MCPO Wainscott and his team have done an outstanding job ensuring the new JRR course materials were ready for order by the Oct. 1 deadline set by G-W. He was also instrumental in getting the law enforcement training videos transferred into a DVD format. If you have suggestions about our non-resident course material or the new PQG, please email MCPO Wainscott, ewainscott@cginstitute.uscg.mil, and let him know what you think. Please be helpful in your comments, so we can improve these products and make them the most user friendly.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge my Information Technology Department. They have been turning and burning all year long by serving in a damage control capacity when all the viruses struck the government computer systems. The IT department did an outstanding job during those attacks and were extremely proactive in keeping our domain clean and secure, which allowed limited disruptions in service to our customers. They also transitioned our servers to a more secure facility here at FAA, allowing for improved capability in a more secure environment. They have been instrumental all year long in bringing our Automated Degree Planning program online and working to automate the tuition assistance form as well as many other internal projects that impact day-to-day operations.

Remember this year we will have our annual ESO Symposium in Oklahoma City, with the dates occurring sometime in August, so be on the look out for more specifics on this in a few months.

Hope your holidays were the best and wishing you a happy New Year!

Sincerely,

LCDR Todd J. Campbell

Students earn college credit aboard CGC Kukui

Underway class includes field trip to Pearl Harbor

The CGC *Kukui* recently returned from a two-week trip along the Northwest Hawaiian Islands to Midway Atoll. In addition to their regular underway duties and responsibilities, five crewmembers participated in a college course on American history, which was fully funded by the Coast Guard.

The students had a unique opportunity to enhance their learning experience by actually visiting Midway Atoll, the site of the turning point in the Pacific Campaign during World War II.

The class, U.S. history since 1865, was administered by local Wayland Baptist University. Before departing for Midway, the class met aboard the *Kukui* for a traditional lecture with Professor Justin Vance and went on a field trip to Pearl Harbor.

The class visited both the Arizona Memorial and the Battleship Missouri, the sites of the symbolic beginning and end of the Pacific Campaign. Professor Vance, a former docent on the Battleship Missouri, was even able to get the class into spaces not accessible to the general public.

While underway, the class followed a lesson plan provided by



The CGC *Kukui*

Professor Vance including chapters to read, important terms, discussion topics and videos to watch. Professor Vance also prepared two essay assignments and a mid-term exam, which two junior officers administered to the students. The officers also met with the class for about two hours each evening to moderate discussions on the reading.

The real highlight of the course though, was a full tour of Midway Atoll and its many historic sites. The class visited pillboxes and gun mounts all around Midway Island, walked along the now overgrown runway on Eastern Island and visit-

ed the building where Lt George Cannon's heroic actions earned him the first Medal of Honor of the war.

After the *Kukui* returned to Honolulu, the class met with Professor Vance two more times to discuss the last few chapters in the textbook, review the material from the course and take a final exam. After completing the class, each student received three lower-level college credits. Through the Coast Guard's tuition assistance program and the Mutual Assistance Supplemental Education Grant, the class and textbook was completely free to the students.

Law enforcement training videos

Coast Guard law enforcement training videos now are available on DVD. The two-disc set includes **Recreational Boating Safety, Authority and Jurisdiction, Law Enforcement Equipment,**

Handcuffing, Boating While Intoxicated, Continuum of Force System, Defensive Tactics, Boarding Procedures, Use of Force Policy, Weapons Handling and Alien Migration.

These courses can be ordered by education services officers from the Institute's web site at www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/courses/appendix.html.